

# **MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

**December 2002**

## **OFFICE OF THE FIRE ADMINISTRATOR**

### **Commission Office**

The following items were discussed at the December 12, 2002 Fire and Rescue Commission meeting:

- The Fire Administrator briefed the Commission on the plan the distribution of prophylactic medications for first responders in the MCFRS in the event of a bio-terrorist event.
- The Fire Administrator outlined actions taken by the MCFRS in response to the recent ice storm.
- The Fire Administrator advised that the DOL Executive Regulation is to be submitted to the County Executive.
- The consent calendar, consisting of authorization to dispose of a 1986 Seagrave engine and resolutions to outgoing Councilmembers Dacek, Ewing, and Morella, was approved.
- The Fire Administrator presented his proposed FY04 MCFRS Operating Budget to the FRC. A worksession for the FRC to establish a record to develop comments and recommendations to the County Executive and the County Council on the budget proposal has been scheduled for December 19, 2002.
- The Fire Administrator was authorized by the FRC to issue an interim directive implementing the Water Supply SOP as drafted by the Water Supply Procedure Task Force.
- The FRC approved the advertisement of the draft FRC Appeals Executive Regulation in the County Register.

### **Planning and Research**

DTC Resnick, Senior Planner Gutschick and Commissioner Freeman met with Maryland National Park and Planning Commission Regional Planners to discuss MCFRS needs and plans in each of the Planning Areas.

DTC Resnick participated in the MEMA/MTF Regional Session on December 13. This served as a regional focus group for the use of MEMA and Federal grant funds in the future. Also at this session were representatives from Corporate Development Services and DVFRS.

DTC Resnick, Senior Planner Gutschick and Deputy Chief Quigley (Rockville VFD) met with representatives of the City of Rockville Planning Office concerning an "Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance" being considered by the City of Rockville Council.

### **Budget**

The Office of Research and Planning supported the CIP Budget update to the Office of Management and Budget on December 2 and to the County Executive and his staff on December 12.

The staff of the Office of Research and Planning devoted significant time and effort toward development and support of the Fire Administrator's Proposed Operating Budget for FY04 and the Fire Administrator's Proposed Savings Plan for FY03.

## EOC/GIS

DTC Resnick met with Capt. Nancy Demme of MCP regarding access and security issues for the public and the media at the new EOC. As a result of this meeting, modifications are being proposed to the design of the EOC; these are being coordinated with DPW&T.

There was significant Emergency Management Group and OEM effort associated with the ice storm that occurred on the morning of December 11. Schools were closed, the County Government went on a liberal leave policy and power outages affected tens of thousands of County residents, many of whom were without power for nearly 100 hours. EMG representatives coordinated public information announcements, the opening of one warming shelter and an aggressive, door-to-door Safety in Our Neighborhood outreach effort that distributed over 100 smoke detectors and checked the welfare of thousands of up-county residents.

DTC Resnick attended the Government Video Technology Expo with a representative of TMC and the architect for the new EOC. Several items that might be purchased for the new EOC were evaluated at this Expo.

DTC Resnick and GIS Manager Ierley attended an LEPC Utilities Workshop on December 16. The GIS section obtained significant information concerning utilities in and around the County.

DTC Resnick coordinated a tour of the new ECC/EOC for seven representatives of the Office of Management and Budget. Lt. Dallas Lipp provided an outstanding presentation on the ECC component. Darlene Flynn and Cheryl Reed both assisted in explaining the fiscal impacts of certain aspects of the project.

GIS Manager Sarah Ierley produced the following items for MCFRS:

3 maps for OEM

1 Visio diagram for the Water Supply Implementation Work Group

5 maps for Safety in Our Neighborhood

1 map for Riskwatch

10 maps and 6 data requests for the Office of the Fire Administrator

20 maps, 47 data requests for the Operations Bureau.

## Emergency Management

Prevention Award – Chip Scuderi of Bonny Marlin, Inc was honored with a “Safety First” Award from the Montgomery County Local Emergency Planning Council for Hazardous Materials (LEPC) at the January meeting. Bonny Marlin had introduced a zero hazardous waste mechanized system for cleaning paint equipment for auto body companies. Bonny Marlin has received both a state and national award for the business innovation and pollution prevention program. The LEPC recommends that county agencies look at the process in our county owned facilities.

LEPC – The LEPC held its quarterly meeting in January and approved a draft of new bylaws for administration authored by its Technical Advisors Committee. The bylaws are a precondition for qualification for public safety hazmat training and LEPC funding under the bill passed by the State legislature last session. The bill authorizes MDE to license all SARA Title III facilities and share a portion the funds collected with active LEPC’s across the state. Funding is not expected until 2004 to the local jurisdictions, but the County LEPC is gearing up to receive the funds which have not yet been specified.

Bioterrorism Exercise – OEM presented the “Introduction to Disaster Command System” class and a 1 ½ day bioterrorism mass casualty exercise on January 22-23. In addition to county Public Health and staff from the Dennis Avenue Health Clinic, Emergency Management, CUPF, School Health, and Maryland National Capital Park Police, nurses from Frederick County, the VA Medical Center in DC, and the Medical Director from Anne Arundel County participated. D/C Resnick, Ric Helfrich from Public Health, Bob Nemchin and Kathee Henning OEM were instructors. Red Cross sent participants and provided brochures for handouts.

Radiological Exercise – The radiological “ Dirty Bomb” exercise was moved from February 25<sup>th</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup> due to the late notification by state of the grant award. FEMA has awarded OEM \$10,000 (no match) to conduct a regional exercise. The RADEX Exercise Design Team (co-chaired by Bob Nemchin and District Chief Bob Stephan) has been meeting since last April 2002 to design the exercise. National Navy Medical Hospital is participating with volunteers for the decontamination operation. OEM is looking for mock victim volunteers to participate at the second site for the exercise.

Utilities – OEM staff developed and presented a LEPC Workshop in Emergency Preparedness with Utilities and Transportation on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Included for the first time were dam owners and operators and State Dept. of Natural Resources Dam Safety officials to discuss dam safety and emergency preparedness plans that are circulating for update and approval. Fire Chiefs with dams in their first due areas will be sent copies of plans to sign-off on for approval. Over 60 individuals participated in the workshop. The Workshop was federally funded under the Hazardous Materials Emergency Planning grant (HMEP). The County’s 20% was a soft match of salaries.

GEMAC/SERC – Kathee Henning attended the quarterly GEMAC/SERC Executive Committee to receive a briefing by state officials on issues to be presented to the new Governor’s transition team. Among the issues K. Henning raised were greater resources for local jurisdictions, and faster turnaround of award allocations for terrorism grants. The Executive Committee reviewed and updated the draft Annual Report that will be presented to the Governor. The report reflects the new reorganization proposed to separate GEMAC (Emergency Management issues) from SERC (hazmat issues) and requests clarification of the role of the GEMAC vs. the Homeland Security Council.

Lowes Heroes – K. Henning served on the national judging panel for the Lowes Heroes national grand prize award. Each local Lowes store is awarded \$2500 annually to partner with nonprofit organizations to develop and implement home safety programs. The partnerships submit entries for the national award of \$10,000.

e-Montgomery - OEM Staff met with eMontgomery staff to discuss fees for credit card transactions and issues associated with the use of eMontgomery for OEM customer service needs. Albert George joined OEM staff and DTS staff to discuss maintenance and support issues for Hazlink database since program has been migrated to the SQL server and new customer service initiatives that DTS was proposing for MCFRS/OEM.

Roam Secure/Dialogic – OEM staff Mike Krumlauf, District Chief Jim Resnick, and Albert George have been reviewing the capabilities of these two automated notification systems. Both will be tested during the March 25<sup>th</sup> Radiological Exercise.

Red Cross – DTC Resnick and Ms. Henning met with Chris Paladino, Executive Chief Officer of the Montgomery County Chapter of the Red Cross. As a result of this meeting, the Red Cross

will likely have greater presence on fires and other disasters within the County. The Chapter will be opening a new upCounty facility in March to provide expanded services for county residents. Red Cross participated in setting up shelter at the Marriott for the residents of the Bethesda Promenade after the 4<sup>th</sup> alarm fire in January.

Business Outreach – OEM Staff Bob Nemchin was a speaker along with Fire Administrator Gordon Aoyagi and District Chief Jim Resnick at the Corporate Volunteer Council of businesses. The topic was business involvement in community emergency preparedness. In addition to programs with their employees, businesses were encouraged to join the Business Reserve Corp and sponsor programs under the Citizen Corp Council for Homeland Security.

HazMat regulation – The Haz Mat fee program is on schedule and has raised \$333,000 this year. Included are new fees from an enforcement program to identify and collect fees which are more than a year past due. OEM staff have drafted proposed fee changes to the regulation since fees have not been updated since 1993.

Search and Rescue - EMG Volunteers from Mid-Atlantic DOGS were called out for five searches in the last month for Alzheimer patients or individuals with mental incapacities. Extreme cold temperatures made these missing person searches very time sensitive. Incident commanders varied between law enforcement and fire rescue events.

Volunteers - Plans are underway for the annual EMG Volunteer Awards and Recognition for February 13<sup>th</sup>. New ID cards will be issued at the event in coordination with the awards. Internal Affairs worked with OEM to develop new ID cards. OEM will present new security procedures prior to issuing ID cards.

Training - Plans are underway for the annual EMG Communications in Disaster class for February 13<sup>th</sup>. The class will follow the EMG Award event.

#### Community Education Safety Section

- Attended various Staff meetings.
- Replied, by phone or email, to 80 citizen, 30 FD, & 15 “other” (media, county gov’t) inquires (18 hours).
- Met with various department staff and members totaling 15 hours.
- Composed various Memos and Safety Tips for dissemination to all work locations. (4 Hours)
- Scheduled various community education events and classes (5 hours).
- Dealt with various personnel and program issues relating to community safety (2 hours).
- Various correspondences composed and disseminated. (5 hours)
- Continued with various Fire Evacuation Planning sessions for various High/Mid Rise Office/Residential, churches, and other 1-story buildings **NOW IMPACTING over 131,700 people encompassing 158 HOURS.**
- Meetings re CERT/CHAMP program developmental (2 hours).
- Operation Extinguish management. (2 hour)
- CPSS Tech’s participated in several Car Seat Checks.
- Home Fire Safety Evaluation conducted. (1.5 hours)
- Attended COG Pub. Ed. Group meeting (3 hours).
- Thank You letter to Energizer for donating 200 9-V batteries (1 Hour).
- Supervise Towson University Intern (5 hours)
- Fire & Injury Prevention Summit background work (2 hours).

- Attended FRC Community Outreach Meeting (2 hours).
- Attended Inauguration Day for the County Executive and County Council (1.5 hours).
- Attended Friendship Heights Public Safety Meeting (3 hours)
- Conducted Essentials of Firefighting class on Fire Prevention (3 hours)
- Attended Greater Bethesda-Chevy Chase Chamber of Commerce Public Safety Meeting (3 hours)
- Participated in MCFRS Today video (1 hour)
- Composed and disseminated E-Newsletter to citizens ( 1 hour)

**Risk Watch:** Risk Watch continues to maintain a strong alliance with the Montgomery County Public Schools and the program continues to pick up momentum. Risk Watch's goal is to educate and activate children and families to practice better home safety to reduce injuries and save lives. MCFRS is currently creating and implementing an action plan for diversification, expansion and the development of additional safety programs to build awareness, credibility and impact.

Montgomery County has just been selected by the NFPA as a Risk Watch Champion and will be participating in a three-year grant program to expand Risk Watch further in the community. Montgomery County joins a very select group of States and provinces chosen to be a Champion.

The program will be adding a module to Risk Watch: a Natural Disasters program that will be launched this spring to complement NFPA's highly successful school-based childhood injury prevention curriculum, Risk Watch. Our goal is to maintain a strong and productive alliance between MCFRS and MCPS as our two organizations work as partners to address the "quiet crisis" of unintentional home injuries in America.

### *Corporate Development Services*

#### Automation Section

This section finished setting up all of the new CAD computers on the network. The CPU on those computers should be left on and the monitor should be turned off. The computers should not be disturbed until cutover to the new CAD. The new CAD and EMBRS computers are being cut over to fiber as it is lit at each station.

Our new Information Technology Specialist I position, Mr. Richard Ballman, started this month. He will be working with Mr. John Bardini until he becomes familiar with the department. John and Richard responded to over 100 calls for hardware and software support. They also set up a number of new workstations and printers at the new ECC including those for ECC administrative staff and the new ECC automation staff, Mr. Po Kar Chu as well as the CAD and RMS manager positions.

The Outlook email accounts were created for the Recruit Class 22. Outlook email accounts will be created for all other department county employees in the beginning of January.

We worked with TRW and PRC on refining and testing the interface between the Altaris CAD and EMBRS.

We responded to 2 data requests and worked with the County Attorney on an affidavit in response to a lawsuit.

We participated on and attended meetings of the County's Technical Operation Managers Group, the CAD/EMBRs Automation Committee and the Mobile Data Implementation Group.

We continued to work with DTS on the submission of the department's annual IT budget.

We established a good partnership with Steve Lohr's organization (a major customer of ours).

We devised (and will soon execute) a plan to ensure smooth migration from old CAD to new CAD. The plan includes the tasks to 1) QA all operational data, 2) execute additional real-life test cases to exercise the new system and 3) dry run CAD in all fire houses.

Approximately 90% of career personnel have participated in Outlook Web Access training classes as part of the Join Training Initiative since January 6th. In the big picture, few organizations are able to coordinate nearly 1000 people to participate in training using limited resources and no budget.

IT has completed development of two products for PS2000 Mobile Data Computer (MDC) training in the field. Both will be optional for people to use:

- An interactive MDC primer that will enable someone to sit down at a station (desktop) computer and get a brief, hands-on tutorial of the MDC basics.
- An interactive MDC test-prep package that will enable someone to learn some basic MDC terminology and get a quick glimpse of questions similar to those on the competency-based evaluation (test) that all personnel are required to pass (MCFRS policy).

Lieutenant John Dimitriadis and IT are preparing for MDC Train-the-Trainer (TTT), which will begin on February 3rd. (End user classes are tentatively scheduled to begin on February 17th.)

IT has begun development of station-level training that will teach end-users about network security (low-level) and how to access the new technology coming to the stations -- Windows 2000, Novell networking, new CAD system, etc.

#### Fleet and Facilities Section

- Provided support for various fleet and facility issues relating to PS2000.
- Attended as staff for apparatus at the December Apparatus Specifications Committee meeting. Several issues require follow-up activity.
- Attended as staff for the December LFRD Fleet Management meeting. Several issues require follow-up activity.
- A replacement aerial tower, on order from Pierce Manufacturing, had a mid-point inspection.
- Comments were provided on the proposed standardized apparatus check sheet.
- Coordinated a meeting between the Fire Administrator, various LFRD and DFRS representatives to discuss methods to reduce fleet downtime.
- Reviewed and changed wireless phone plans for various personnel in an effort to reduce costs.
- Reviewed and provided comments on the detailed design submission for replacement Silver Spring FS #1.
- Reviewed specifications and provided comments on a replacement brush truck to be

purchased for the LDVFD.

## **DIVISION OF FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

### **Bureau of Operations**

#### *Administration*

Considerable effort has been invested in budget preparation, developing several contingency plans, and preparing for implementation depending on the funding level. This includes the FY03 savings plan and FY04 budget. The new GIS position, Sarah Ierley, has proven invaluable in the Bureau's preparation efforts.

The MIDS office is transitioning from the Bureau Chief's office to the new District Chief's position assigned to FROMS.

The EMS Section has placed new Mark I kits on all medic units, primary AFRA, hazmat and the decon units. This is a kit that allows for triage as well as airway management.

#### *Safety*

#### *Specialty Teams*

#### *Collapse Rescue/Urban Search and Rescue*

#### *Swiftwater Rescue Team*

This month of water rescue duties resulted in 4 calls for service. One incident was a prolonged event in Frederick County.

Personnel conducted monthly training which included operations on ice covered bodies of water.

### **Bureau of Program Support Services**

#### *Administration*

#### *Communications*

#### December 2002

Total Telephone Calls Received:	28659 (Incomplete Data)
Total 9-1-1 Calls Received:	9225 (Incomplete Data)
Total Admin Calls Received:	20416 (Incomplete Data)

- Chief Lohr completed the two year requirements for the NFA=EFO program during the first two weeks of December.
- ECC staff completed Telestaff training for the anticipated 01-01-03 upstart.
- Testing for Recruit Class 16 personnel was conducted in anticipation of filling current vacancies at the ECC.
- MFF Jefferson continues to support TRW/PRC personnel with the new Altaris CAD software.
- A successful systems integration test (SIT) was conducted with TRW.

- FF Mike Baltrosky has accepted a position with MCFRS as a civilian CAD Manager.
- Work continues on a training plan that will support up to eight new transfers and the existing staff for the anticipated April 13 cutover.
- A complete review of the Altaris CAD training manual is underway to assure compliance with the many revisions to the software.
- An apparatus-tracking database is in development for the supervisor's position at the ECC.
- A proposal for an ECC call back notification/paging system has been forwarded to corporate development.
- Work continues to support a back-up ECC at the new radio shop.
- Chief Rothenhoeffer has developed a final punch list for the facility at 1300 Quince Orchard Blvd (PSCC).
- Jim Grissom attended a meeting with Verizon, Montgomery County Police-ECC, State Numbers Board, and representatives from three other Maryland counties that are ready to implement Phase I & Phase II. The meeting was on 12-19-02 and was about Phase II Wireless E9-1-1 implementation in Montgomery County and the State of Maryland in general.

## Training

Exams completed for Emergency Vehicle Driver Testing in December are:

Written	8
Practical	12

Two sessions of "Conflict Resolution", part of the Command Officer Professional Development and Improvement program were held on December 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, with 20 students attending.

Three career and one volunteer EMT-Paramedic were awarded charge status in December.

Graduation ceremony for the 34 members of Recruit Class #22 will be held on Friday, January 10, 2003 at 11:00am, in the Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center of Montgomery College, Rockville Campus.

EMT-Intermediate (EMT-I) class continues with 17 students.

## **Bureau of Life Safety Services**

### *Administration*

### *Fire Code Enforcement*

### Fire and Explosive Investigation

In December, Fire and Explosive Investigators investigated 30 accidental fires and 9 criminal fire related incidents. The Bomb Squad responded to a total of 13 explosive / suspicious package / letter, threat incidents. The total estimated dollar loss for accidental fires was \$ 3,452,100 and \$ 104,850 for criminal fire related incidents.



Lt. Shaw and his K-9 Partner Hank were requested to assist with investigations in Frederick County and in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

There were 12 county residents injured by hostile fires this month either by attempting to fight a fire or caught them selves on fire due to carelessness. None of the burn injuries were life threatening.

Investigators were able to arrest a Bethesda man for the incendiary fire he set to his home on Lone Oak Dr. Operational crews did an outstanding job in recognizing and preserving the scene for investigators. The individual arrested was held at MCDC on a \$ 57,000 dollar bond. The fire damage was estimated to be \$70,000 dollars.

## **DIVISION OF VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICES**

- Attended inauguration ceremonies for the County Executive and Council at Richard Montgomery High School. Also attended a reception in their honor at the EOB
- Conducted another meeting regarding the budget and the System Environmental Management process
- Attended a variety of further budget meetings
- Participated in the Mont. Co. Chamber of Commerce Awards Committee meeting
- Met with selected Chiefs, Chief Strock and Deputy Chief Allwang and later with Fred Welsh and the LFRD Presidents regarding respective budget matters
- Issued a safety speech for TV taping and distribution – at old Sta. 25
- Participated in the annual luncheon with the County Executive
- Met with President Chornock, Chief Dmuchowski and Fred Welsh regarding GVFD issues
- Attended the Terrorism seminar with all area utility, transportation and water facility representatives – conducted by the EMG
- Participated in both the MCFRS and DVFRS holiday luncheons
- Attended the Fire Board, Chiefs Advisory and Operations Committee Meetings
- Mediated personal, personnel and/or sensitive issues with various LFRDs, etc.